Revelation 9

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

Fifth Trumpet:

Another star fell from heaven to earth. This time the "star" is personified. It must be an angelic being since "he" is given the key to the Bottomless Pit (the Abyss). Some commentators suggest that this is the same being mentioned in verse 11. Others think it may be Satan because of what both Isaiah and Jesus said (see Isaiah 14:12-15; Luke 10:18).

Isaiah 14:12-15 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Luke 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

This fallen angel is given the key to the Bottomless Pit, which means that until this point it is in the possession of Christ (Revelation 1:18).

Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Since He has the key to the Abyss until then, no geologist is ever going to locate it.

The Bottomless Pit (*Tartarus*) is where disobedient fallen angels are imprisoned awaiting the final judgement, (Jude :6; 2 Peter 2:4).

Jude :6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

2 Peter 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.

These were the angels that went beyond the limitations imposed upon them by God at the beginning (Genesis 6:1-4).

Genesis 6:1-4 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

It is the same place that the demons feared to be sent when Jesus cast them out (Luke 8:31).

Luke 8:31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

The angel opens the bottomless pit. Here we find the worst of fallen angels are temporarily released. Somewhere on earth there is a

shaft (or several of them) which leads to the Pit (see Numbers 16:33).

Numbers 16:33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

As the door is opened a great plume of acrid smoke bellows out. Its appearance is like that of an erupting volcano. This vast evil vapour, like dense, black smoke, blocks out the sunlight.

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Ascending out of the smoke there is seen hellish creatures that resemble grotesque locusts. These creatures are given the power to devastate mankind with their scorpion-like tails. These will cause great agonising pain to whoever is inflicted by them. These are not real locusts, but hideous angels dedicated to Satan's cause. Joel 2:1-11 offers us a graphic description of this same event.

Joel 2:1-11 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like

mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

Even within such an terrible scene, God is giving the unsaved yet another chance to repent before it is too late.

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

These locusts will not go after vegetation like the natural creatures they resemble, instead they will afflict mankind. Their mission is to sting everyone except the 144,000 (and it is likely that those who have repented through the ministry of these Jewish evangelists will be exempt too). Only these will be free from the power of this gruesome host. The 144,000, as we remember from Revelation 7, will be sealed and protected by God.

5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

The fallen angels have the power to kill but are commanded not to do so. They will relentlessly torment human beings for five months. It may take five months for the effects of the sting to fade away.

6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

The pain and agony will be so great that people will wish for death. They will try to commit suicide, but death itself will flee from them. For five months no one on earth will die, but will have to endure the severe torment inflicted by these locusts-like beings.

7 And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

The Appearance of the Creatures:

a) They have a horse-like appearance. They look like armour-plated war horses racing into battle (Joel 2:4).

Joel 2:4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

b) They have, what appeared to be, a golden crown upon their heads, which may be a sign of rank or authority.

c) They seemed to have human-like faces, which obviously confirms that they are not natural creatures.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

d) Their hair is as long as that of a woman. Jeremiah 51:27 states that locusts can have coarse hair-like bristles. The KJV calls these “rough caterpillars”.

Jeremiah 51:27 Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillers.

e) They have teeth as long and sharp as a lion (see Joel 1:6).

Joel 1:6 For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

They will be the most evil predators the world has ever seen (Joel 2:2).

Joel 2:2 A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

f) They wear breastplates of iron, which is used to indicate that man will not have weapons powerful enough to pierce their body armour.

g) Their wings beat so loudly that it sounded like thousands of chariots racing into battle (Joel 2:5).

Joel 2:5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

This suggests that they will cause great fear at the sight and sound of them.

10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

h) As mentioned earlier, their tails look like scorpion's stings. For five whole months these creatures will afflict and torment mankind to the point of death without actually killing them.

11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

These entities have a ruler over them who leads them into battle. The ruler is a fallen angel named Apollyon (the destroyer). Only four angels are named in Scripture, Satan, Abaddon, Gabriel and Michael. It's interesting to note that one of the gods of the ancient world was called Apollo, and we know that such gods were simply fallen angels. His Hebrew name is Abaddon (and he is a bad-un). This being is not Satan, since he and the other angels are released from the Bottomless Pit, instead he is one of Satan's chiefs. Some have suggested that these creatures are John's way of describing helicopters, but few of the details fit that picture. It is better to see them as literal evil spirits of the most infernal order.

12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

Two more trumpets must follow – more woes coming upon humanity.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

Sixth Trumpet:

As the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, John heard a voice coming from the golden altar that stood before God – this is the altar of incense seen in an earlier chapter.

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

The voice commanded an angel to go and release the four angels who were bound by the Euphrates River. This is in the Babylonian region (in modern-day Iraq). From this region came all of the pagan and idolatrous religions known to man. It should be noted that these are fallen angels, for no angel of God is ever bound.

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

The loosing of the angels and the ensuing judgement is for a very specific time in future history. It cannot come before God's set time. If we add the number who will be killed by these four evil angels to the one-fourth slain during the fourth seal judgement (Revelation 6:8), we arrive at half the population of the world.

16 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

The four angels (maybe centaur-like beings) of death bring with them 200 million others to slay a third of mankind. This will happen exactly five months after the sixth woe begins. The numbers are very precise.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

The apostle John does not describe a human army, but rather an angelic one. Expositors of this text have sometimes attempted to symbolise the army and infer that it will come from China. Nothing about this interpretation is justified, especially since everything mentioned appears to be anything but human or animal. The horses they rode were like earthly horses, except they had lion-like heads, and smoke, fire and brimstone came from their mouths.

The riders wore breastplates that appeared to be on fire; represented by the colour of jacinth and brimstone.

18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

A third of the world population will be destroyed by the smoke, fire and brimstone. Verse 20 states that these things are actually plagues.

19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

The horses had power to kill with their mouths, but they also had multi-headed, snake-like tails. We should understand that fallen angels can take on any form they desire, such as aliens, UFOs, ghosts, and animals, so these horses may simply be appearances of such entities. Whatever they are, they will supernaturally wound millions of people.

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.

With all these terrible things happening we would think that mankind would come to repentance, but amazingly, they will not. Instead they further harden their hearts against God. This reminds us of how the Pharaoh hardened his heart against God in the days of Moses (Exodus 7:22; 9:7).

Exodus 7:22 And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said.

Exodus 9:7 And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

They persist in worshipping idols. The devils they worship have indeed come down amongst them. This also speaks of the dramatic increase in demonology in the last days. This may indicate that, as the torment ebbs away at the end of the thirteen months, people will again return to their old ways of humanism, and pagan religions. They will have learned nothing from their experience, but will actually congratulate themselves on their ability to survive.

21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

They will not repent, having lost all sense of right and wrong, they will continue to murder, use hallucinating drugs (sorceries, Greek *pharmakeia*), engage in sexual perversion (refers to all promiscuity whether it be adultery, homosexuality or lesbianism), and theft. The very things that are prevalent in society today.